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Editorial Comment & A Political Letter

A Nation Once Again - - - - -

What is Wrong with Education in Ontario? - *W. L. Grant*

Leaves from a European Note Book - *Margaret Wrong*

(I) Russian Refugee Students—Prague

Echoes of the Miners' Strike in Nova Scotia *J. S. Woodsworth*

Correspondence: A Point of Patriotism

Knuckles and Gloves - - - - *John MacNaughton*

Poems - - - - - *E. J. Pratt*

The Choir Invisible - - - *J. E. H. MacDonald*

W. H. Hudson—The Writer - - - *Frank Morris*

Church by the Sea (drawing) - *J. E. H. MacDonald*

The Bookshelf: An English Poet, &c.

Trade and Industry - - - - *G. E. Jackson*

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# THE CANADIAN FORUM



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TORONTO, JANUARY, 1923

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**I**MMIGRATION, so we are told by Sir Henry Thornton, is the need of the hour. Mr. Stewart has told us the same thing, and the wires from Ottawa are kept warm with despatches as to how this need shall be met. The Mother of Parliaments is for relieving our pain by relieving the British Isles of a considerable portion of the unemployed. Orphan children from England and France and (it is whispered) from Armenia, too, are to join the throng which is to bring healing to Canada. We are bound to assert, having some knowledge of conditions in Canada on the side-roads and the side-streets, that immigration is not our greatest need at the present time. We need, first, to make conditions of living in Canada such that our young men and young women of Canadian stock who have never been weakened by periodic unemployment and state relief, shall feel free to add to the population of Canada in the natural way. Immigration is no substitute for the cradle. He is a hero, indeed, who to-day undertakes on modest wages to raise a family of respectable dimensions. And what a mockery the appeal for farmers and agricultural labourers from abroad becomes, when for the past two years very few native farmers, who know Canadian conditions and have skill in the varied processes of agriculture, have been able to 'break even'. These men may be brought to the farms in trainloads (thus reducing for the moment the railway deficits), but under present circumstances no force in heaven or Ottawa can keep them on the farms. They will flock to the cities, with the results that appeared in the winter of 1913-14. A great influx of immigrants under present conditions will but add to our top-heaviness, and cause untold hardship until an adjustment is effected.

**T**HE city of Toronto seems anxious to enhance its reputation for intolerance. Two months ago the mayor announced that Father O'Flanagan, the Irish Republican, would not be permitted to speak in Toronto. Those interested in hearing the views of Father O'Flanagan thereupon subsided: if he spoke in Toronto it was *in camera* as Jim Larkin spoke before him. Presently Jean Longuet, a

prominent French pacifist and socialist, who was touring the States to counteract, it is said, the militaristic propaganda of M. Clemenceau, was invited to Toronto. Massey Hall was engaged for the meeting. Two weeks later, when the Secretary of the Independent Labour Party went to the manager of the hall to conclude arrangements, he was told that a police permit must first be secured. The chief of police when interviewed withheld permission on the ground that he did not know enough about M. Longuet. It was necessary to approach the police several times, and on one occasion a subordinate explained naively that other organizations had to be consulted. The mayor also was called upon, but was either unable or unwilling to expedite matters. Several days elapsed before the police finally gave their consent to the meeting. Since when, we may well ask, was police consent necessary to the appearance of a distinguished visitor on a public platform in a Canadian city? Are all foreign speakers at Canadian and Rotary Clubs subjected to a similar inquisition? Or is it only when a Labour leader (whose socialistic views are not confined to a frantic support of 'Hydro') is invited that such care is regarded as necessary? It is high time that we realized that freedom of speech is too precious a thing to be entrusted to the decision of the police.

**S**O the Conference to end conferences has ended the Entente Cordiale! In view of the deep gulf which separates the French from the British standpoint, little else could have been expected or desired. With Mr. Lloyd George still in power a further compromise might conceivably have been arrived at, but only at the expense of a further postponement of a final settlement. As Mr. Bonar Law points out, the reparations problem is not a political but a business question. If France chooses to seize everything in Germany on which she can lay her hands she may obtain some two billion gold marks in the next few months. This will do something towards solving the problem of her next budget; but it will make the financial recovery of her debtor impossible. She will lose the thirty billions which even



Herr Cuno would have offered her in return for a breathing space and the acceptance of goodwill as adequate security for payment. The British plan showed at least some appreciation of realities. It provided for a four years' moratorium. While establishing a 'Foreign Finance Council' to supervise Germany's finances, with a view to the balancing of her budget and the stabilization of the mark, it specifically declared for the abandonment of all other forms of 'pledges'. Even so, however, it probably erred in the direction of asking too much. Fifty billion gold marks is more than most economists regard Germany as being capable of paying. Incidentally it contained no proposal that the occupied territory should be progressively evacuated as payments were made. Some such inducement to Germany to pay up to the full extent of her capacity would appear to be indispensable for the success of any scheme at all.

HOW far France's threat to occupy the Ruhr is a mere bluff remains to be seen. The operation would be a serious military undertaking. It is notorious that the Ruhr district is a hotbed of semi-revolutionary discontent. There is little doubt that any attempt to introduce French managers and French engineers would have to be backed up by armed force. Industry might be brought to a complete standstill and France come out empty-handed. The policy therefore seems that of a lunatic. For our part, we refuse to believe that public men in France are the fools they are sometimes painted. It must long have been obvious to them that there was no serious prospect of an indemnity on a scale sufficient to restore French finances to a flourishing condition. While the illusion lasted it obscured the more time-honoured policy of 'security'. Now that it has gone, impossible reparation demands furnish an excellent cloak for a reversion to the older policy—the dismemberment of the German Empire. The recent trend of French activity on the Rhineland all points this way. Officials and school teachers who are not Rhinelanders are being dismissed. A vigorous propaganda, which includes the publication of a daily newspaper in the German language, is being carried on in favour of the establishment of an independent Rhineland state. France still hopes to obtain a Rhine frontier in fact, if not in name. With an independent buffer state under her own aegis, cut off by a customs barrier from the East but not from the West, she sees herself at last secure from the German menace. If she can achieve this end, she will be well content to forego reparations. Indeed as M. Dariac observes in his now famous report: 'We are afraid of seeing German industries develop in the proportion that would enable her to assume payment of the debt she has acknowledged.'

IF this interpretation of the facts be the true one, we may perhaps look for a temporary move against the Ruhr. With the gradual acknowledgment of the failure of this policy to secure its ostensible ends it would gradually be abandoned. But each step in the abandonment would see a further move in the severance of the Rhineland from the Reich under the guise of compensation. Suppose this should happen, what then? Will France have obtained the security she desires? It is true that the seizure of the Rhineland would not have quite the crippling effect on German industry, and therefore on the European economic structure, that the permanent occupation of the Ruhr would inevitably bring about. Yet the menace to the future peace of the world would be equally disastrous. There are nearly nine million Germans in these provinces all passionately devoted to the Fatherland. No part of Germany has a more romantic past or a more truly national culture. The creation of such a *Germania Irredenta* must at all costs be avoided. If Great Britain and America do not meet this crisis with some more constructive policy than the one of non-coöperation they seem to contemplate they will be incurring a terrible responsibility.

THOUGH the 'amicable rupture' at Paris has not hitherto seriously interfered with Allied unity at Lausanne, we are by no means out of the Balkan wood. It is true that Lord Curzon's firmness has won a triumph for British over Russian diplomacy. League of Nations control to protect the interests of minorities has been accepted by the Turks. They are allowed to maintain 5,000 men at Gallipoli, but with this exception the Straits are to be demilitarized. The execution of this policy is to be left to Turkish good faith without external supervision. The Mosul difficulty should scarcely prove insuperable. Yet we may doubt if the compromise over the Straits was a wise one. The Russians demanded that they should be closed to warships, thus turning the Black Sea in effect into a Russian lake. A wiser plan would be completely to neutralize the Black Sea and forbid it to all warships of whatever country. Under the actual settlement any country may in peace time send in a fleet of as large a tonnage as that of any riparian state, while in wartime, if Turkey is neutral, there is to be no limitation at all. No wonder Russia reads implacable British hostility into the agreement. She can justifiably claim that in the event of war her southern frontier would be dangerously exposed. So the Dragon's teeth go on being sown.

AT the time of writing it is announced that the British parliament will re-assemble almost at once to consider the Paris breakdown. The Labour Party will hardly allow the Government to confine



debates to foreign affairs. In the short time since the election it has already won its spurs as the best opposition party of recent years. Mr. Macdonald is a brilliant leader and, quite apart from the number of intellectuals under his banner, he has raw material of fine quality. Much has been made in the press of the 'scenes' of last session. A young and growing party is bound to harbour a few wild men, and the importance of such incidents is easily overestimated. When they have been licked into shape by a few months' experience of parliamentary routine and party discipline, the Glasgow 'barnstormers' may well prove not the least valuable element in the Labour ranks. There will be no lack of problems with which to plague the apostles of tranquillity. The expected revival of trade has not taken place. At one time it was predicted that the end of the year would see the reduction of the unemployed to half a million. At the end of November the figure stood well over three times this number. The Government proposed to set this army to work on housing contracts and railways, but their schemes have shown no signs of materializing. The generosity of the Boards of Guardians is exhausted in the face of imminent bankruptcy. In particular, the miners are again growing restless. While at this juncture they are hardly likely to resort to industrial action, the political pressure they will put on their parliamentary representatives will be all the more severe. The only tangible evidence that he is grappling with these urgent problems to which Mr. Law can point is the placing of contracts for two new battleships. *Parturiunt montes!*

**D**URING the closing days of the old year the University of Toronto was the centre of a unique gathering of students. For the first time in the country's history a Dominion-wide conference of undergraduates assembled. Besides some fifty students from other countries there were representatives from nearly every Canadian university in proportion to its enrolment. The aim of the conference was a full and frank discussion of Canadian problems and an examination of the relation of students and of organized Christianity to those problems. While the conference was summoned by the Student Christian Movement those in attendance were by no means all professing Christians. As one student warned a speaker, there were many 'healthy heathen' present. Side by side in the same group of seats could be seen English-speaking Canadian and French-speaking Canadian, Indian, Japanese and Chinese, white American and Negro, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Christian, Jew and Mohammedan, each speaking frankly from his own standpoint. In all the discussion there was a total absence of illwill. To those who clap their hands when statesmen speak of a better national and

international understanding and then for selfish ends play upon racial and sectarian prejudice, these young people have set an example.

**T**HE article by Mr. W. L. Grant, which appears elsewhere in this issue, is the first of a proposed series on educational problems in Ontario. Mr. Grant argues that many of our troubles arise from the method of organization persisting from pioneer days, namely that of the small school section. With a larger unit, such as the county or the electoral constituency, greater equality of taxation and less deadening uniformity in methods and curriculum would be likely to result. Any reform in education, and particularly in rural education, is dependent upon the return of the school-master. The larger administrative unit affords greater scope to the young man of ideas and ambition, both as teacher and as director. For its success it requires a larger supply of men teachers than has been available for many long years in Ontario. It is an interesting fact that this year sees a marked increase in the attendance of men at training schools and colleges, and the number is now greater than at any time in the last twenty years. For the five years immediately preceding the war the number of men graduates in training averaged 25; this year the number is 86. The number of men who were not graduates attending all grades of normal schools in the same period averaged 180; this year the number is 272. The causes of this increase are largely economic. Business and agriculture now offer fewer opportunities for easy success than in more piping times, while the salaries of teachers have been improved by the work of the teachers' federation. This increase in the number of men available if maintained will make possible educational progress which is out of the question while the conduct of elementary education is almost exclusively in the hands of transients, whose very brightness and charm serve to remove them to another and not less useful sphere.



**A** POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT writes: Mr. Meighen, I hear, is in peril. Recently, seeing the world through a glass darkly, he turned to reading Buckle, and that other strange prophet of pessimism, Mr. Lothrop Stoddard. He became so impressed with Stoddard's thesis (that because workers' wives are having babies, and dukes' wives are not, we are galloping hellwards rapidly) that he actually forgot Mr. King's incompetence long enough to lecture in

Regina on heredity. The novelty of the rôle, as well as its danger to so many of his followers, created a serious flutter; but the worst was yet to happen. For it has just come to light that Mr. Stoddard, who dislikes all Celts and Latins, is a member of the Ku Klux Klan. What more natural, therefore, than that Mr. Meighen and Mr. Stoddard should be indicted as the arch-fiends of the Klan, suspected of burning down Quebec's churches? We have had issues just as silly, just as queer, and certainly just as spectral.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile rumours have revived of a Meighen-Gouin alliance. Mr. Meighen, advised by that precious Liberal, Mr. Ballantyne, would probably welcome it, but of course its achievement depends entirely upon Sir Lomer being successfully challenged by Mr. King—a very remote probability. The younger and more enlightened Conservatives are naturally furious over such manoeuvres. They hold that the party's only hope lies in turning westward, in abandoning the Right, and in becoming a party of political realism and reasoned reform. But it is by no means certain that their views will prevail. The Ballantynes, McCurdys, Draytons, Guthries, and Chaplins constitute a Pretorian Guard strong enough to destroy a nobler Roman than Mr. Meighen.

\* \* \*

There is great exultation in governmental circles over the straying of a few Progressive sheep into the Liberal fold. But it is improbable that the Government will proffer facilities for an exhaustive inquiry into the methods by which the said sheep were lured within the gates. Yet there are certain drawbacks attached to the feat. It will be impossible henceforth to utilize the pleasant tale which has tripped so freely from august lips that the Liberal and Progressive parties are virtually identical, composed of souls whose hearts beat in perfect accord. If this delightful concord had any basis in fact, obviously there could be no profit in luring the said sheep from their original fold. And a really shrewd political strategist would have left them where they were to serve as daily hot-gospellers of the virtues of the Liberal party among their obscurantist Progressive brethren. Moreover the ultimate results of this feat of seduction are incalculable. Mr. Hammell of Muskoka was produced at a critical moment in the Lanark by-election as the captive of the Premier's bow and spear and the immediate result was that the rural polls which revealed great Progressive strength in 1921 (and were fondly expected to be pro-Liberal now, under the inspiration of Mr. Hammell) piled up decisive majorities for the Tory candidate. The rank and file of the Progressive party will only be human if they develop a rooted objection to voting for a party which contains a bevy of their own renegades.

I understand that a Montreal gentleman by the name of Desaulniers has constituted himself the Boswell of Sir Lomer Gouin and is busy compiling data for his *magnum opus*. Part of what might be called the embroideries of the volume will consist of an appreciation of Sir Lomer by that distinguished author, his titular chief. Whether it has been actually penned or not is obscure but its appearance in print is awaited with consuming interest. The current prophecy is that it will limn Sir Lomer as a much misunderstood public character, a triple-first in the worlds of politics, finance, and industry, whom the good fairies attending at his birth gifted with the political genius of Laurier, the humanitarian instincts of, say, John D. Rockefeller, jr., the legal acumen of Edward Blake, and the financial skill of Sir Edmund Walker. There will, however, arise some difficulty in making this picture harmonize with another now being assiduously sketched by the Premier's admirers and occasionally by himself. In it he figures as a political Richard Coeur-de-Lion with his Minister of Justice in the rôle of the Emir Saladin, and they do daily battle for the sacred places of democracy.

\* \* \*

The Solicitor-General constitutes a grim problem for his colleagues. A commendable sense of pity for a defeated rival induced the Premier to offer him a modest place in the Cabinet, but his sojourn being *causa honoris* was to be brief. There came a timely vacancy on the Nova Scotia bench and Mr. Mackenzie was invited to fill it, but by this time he had surveyed his colleagues across a council-board and reached the sad conclusion that he was indispensable to their political salvation. So he declined the offer with thanks. When it was renewed and pressed a few weeks later, 'D.D.' scorned it with a prideful Caledonian gesture. By this time he had realized that on the retiral of Chief-Justice Sir Louis Davies, which is now imminent, some substitute must be unearthed from the Maritime Provinces for the Supreme Court. So the sage of Cape Breton bluntly proclaimed his now unshakeable conviction that it would be beneath the dignity of a man who had once led the great Liberal Party to wear any judicial gown but the ermine of the Supreme Court, and that till his colleagues saw fit to share that conviction his motto was '*Je suis, je reste*'.

\* \* \*

From an unimpeachable source I have lately had a picture of *la vie intime* of one of those friendly conferences in which our Premier's heart delights. As ex-officio Chairman he invariably opens with a neat little speech in which he extols the abstract idea of conference, declares its systematic encouragement for political purposes to be a hallmark of the truly liberal mind, expresses his conviction that nothing really divides the disputant parties, and predicts a speedy and harmonious settlement of the

controversy at issue. Business then commences and the Prime Minister, if he remains in the conference room, is exceedingly active with suggestions and hints of compromise. Usually one set of the conferees has desires or plans antagonistic to the policy of the Federal Government and as their placation is obviously desirable they are flattered by a most exuberant friendliness on the part of the Prime Minister. But just as they see victory within their grasp there intervenes the staccato tone of Mr. Jacques Bureau or the grim Calvinistic voice of the Solicitor-General setting forth the real views of the Federal Government. Thereupon the Premier usually flies at the summons of other pressing business and hope fades in the visiting bosoms. Ten minutes before the Conference adjourns, its Chairman reappears and, whether anything has been accomplished or not, makes another speechlet about the merits of the conference system and bestows his generous blessings upon the conferees.

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### A Nation Once Again

WITH the leave-taking of the Worcester Regiment immediately before Christmas, Dublin has said good-bye to the last of her British garrison. It is a paradox for historians that the departure of troops who were subject, till recently, to promiscuous assassination in the city streets, provoked an outburst of grief, spontaneous and heartfelt, among the people they had ruled and fought. But whatever historians may make of it, it is a paradox that will not perplex the private soldier. For in his personal relations with the Sinn Fein populace, whose deepest political instincts it was his business to suppress, he was generally well-beloved—as the marriage registers of Dublin testify. Nor did he fail to see, through the pomp of Castle Guard, the fears and pettiness on which the Castle rule was founded—which infested the grounds with detectives, as though they had been Abdul Hamid's gardens on the Bosphorus, and compelled the men of famous regiments to present arms to passing dustcarts, lest a Viceroy should miss the ceremonial he craved. The tradition embodied in these two precautions is the theme of

countless stories that the barrack-room will cherish; and whatever his opinion of the system which flowered in the Black-and-Tans, we may be sure that Thomas Atkins mourned no less at taking his last farewell of Dublin, than Dublin at taking its last farewell of him.

It may be that memories of kindness such as inspired these demonstrations of affection will do something, even in our lifetime, towards healing open wounds. Even more effective will be the realization that when at last the Irish Free State Constitution Bill passed into law at Westminster, when Pitt's 'eternal pact' was abrogated once for all, its leading sponsors—Mr. Law and his Unionist colleagues—were men who had devoted the greater part of their political lives to the denial of Irish freedom, and who found themselves now constrained in honour to adore the gods that they had burned. Far more fitting was it that the seal be set on Irish freedom by these reluctant instruments of Providence—amid progressive plaudits—than by the lifelong friends of Ireland in the teeth of Die-Hard opposition. No longer is the alleged political incapacity of Irishmen (except in the columns of *Blackwood's* and *The National Review*) the theme of partisan discussion. Lord Macaulay said once, of the maxim that no people ought to be free until they are fit to use their freedom, that such a proposition 'is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water until he had learnt to swim'. It is now a matter of record that most of those who held this view have repented of their folly.

The choice of Mr. Tim Healy as Ireland's first Governor-General under the new regime (hailed with derision when it was rumoured a few days before his appointment) is evidence of the broad spirit of conciliation which now prevails; and the manner of his appointment could not have been more graceful. A story which has been told and retold of Father Burke, the famous parish priest of Bray, now finds an application not contemplated at the time. Said a guest at a dinner party in the 'nineties, 'What will Tim Healy be, do you think, when we get Home Rule?'—'I'm thinking', said the skeptical ecclesiastic, 'that when we get Home Rule, Tim Healy will be a damned ould man.' The subject of the conversation is indeed 'a damned ould man', but it is to be hoped that his guiding hand may still be felt for many years in the government of Ireland. Not till the Valerista feud is dead can he say, '*Nunc dimittis*'.

It will be many years before an objective estimate can be made of the circumstances leading to the Treaty. Meanwhile, neither Irishmen nor others may hope to secure a perspective in which the revolution and its outcome can be properly viewed. 'As little as we judge an individual by what he himself thinks he is, can we judge a revolutionary epoch by its own consciousness.' At present there is silence on a stage



as thickly filled with dead as at the close of one of Marlowe's tragedies. They make a strange roll of honour, these men who gave their lives for Ireland. Broken-hearted statesmen, traitors full of noble motives, fanatics bent on self-destruction, poets and singers and teachers, soldiers with the qualities of their defects, the list of their names is unending. Almost inevitably Revolution eats its children. Last and not least tragic in their fate, the world will long remember John Redmond, Michael Collins, Terence MacSwiney, Sir Henry Wilson, Erskine Childers, and Sir Roger Casement. We may suppose without irreverence that in God's good time the less heroic figures of Augustine Birrell, Lord Carson of Duncairn, Sir Hamar Greenwood, and Eamon de Valera will join them in the shades.

It will remain for the generation that survives them to build the old wastes and raise up the former desolations, in the days when violence shall no more be heard in the land.

### What is Wrong with Education in Ontario?

**W**HAT is wrong with our Ontario Educational system? Not lack of zeal in the teachers.

The teachers in the Primary and Secondary Schools of Ontario form a body whose unflagging zeal and devotion are not surpassed, if indeed they are equalled, by the members of any other profession. Not hard work or lack of intelligence and sympathy in the last two Ministers of Education, or in any of their chief subordinates. Not any unwillingness to sacrifice on the part of 'Old Man Ontario', when once his duty is shown him. Ever since Governor Simcoe first called his rustic legislators together, the people of this province have shown a noble willingness to spend money on education. Never was this more so than at present; in 1918 the total School Taxes of the Province were \$15,668,377; in 1920 they had risen to \$22,753,822; for the Public Schools alone the figures are: 1918, \$11,784,346; 1921, \$19,214,950. Yet with zealous teachers, intelligent and sympathetic officials, and a generous electorate, the result satisfies nobody; the system arouses no enthusiasm; its products please neither the professor, who complains that his pupils lack enthusiasm and mental discipline, nor the business man, who wails plaintively for the accurate clerks and the intelligent office boys of an older generation.

What is wrong with our Ontario Educational system? According to the latest available figures there are 4,989 one-teacher rural public schools in Ontario. Of these over 1,100, or about 23 per cent., have an average attendance of between 10 and 14; 645, or 13 per cent., an average attendance of less than 10 pupils; 98, or about 2 per cent., an average attendance of less than 5; 12, of which 6 are in

the counties and 6 in the districts, an average attendance of either 1 or 2. Yet each of these schools employs a full-time teacher, and each receives municipal and provincial support. The total annual cost of the education of the 22 children in the 12 schools, exclusive of the cost of buildings, is over \$8,500, of which the provincial treasury provides over \$3,100.

These figures give us the key to the situation, at least in so far as the Public School is concerned, and the Public School is, after all, the basis of our system. By our Education Act every Township is divided for educational purposes into a number of small parts, known as School Sections. To illustrate their average size in the less prosperous parts of the Province, take as an example the Township of Oso. Far from being the least among the fifteen Townships into which Frontenac County is divided, it ranks ninth in population, containing between 950 and 1,000 people. Its total assessment is \$140,500, about that of half-a-dozen ordinary houses in Rosedale; its total taxation for all purposes is about \$8,000. Yet it is divided into no less than eleven School Sections, and each of these infinitesimal divisions is put under the care of three trustees, elected by the voters of the section. These appoint or dismiss the teachers, fix their salaries, and are responsible for the building, equipment, and maintenance of the school building. Thus, with the exception of the appointment or dismissal of the teachers, their powers are purely financial. In such small areas, often of an insignificant assessment value, their chief function is really to keep down salaries and to minimize repairs. It is significant that when, in 1906, the government of Sir James Whitney endeavoured to fix a provincial minimum salary, such a storm of protest was raised by the outlying municipalities that even the high courage of Sir James Whitney proved inadequate, and the attempt was dropped. As it is obviously impossible to give any control of curriculum to these too numerous rural Solons, all such control is in the hands of the officials of the Department of Education in Queen's Park. Their regulations do indeed leave a certain choice of subjects in the hands of the local Principal; but most of the optional subjects imply some extra expense, either for tuition or equipment, and tend to be frowned upon in the rural sections; so that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that no change in curriculum can be made, no educational experiment attempted, unless it is put in force right across the province from Martintown to Windsor, and from Point Pelee to Cochrane, if not indeed to Fort Severn.

The evils of this situation are increased by glaring inequalities of assessment. In the township of York, School Section No. 15 (Fairbank) has shown high public spirit, has built three fine schools, and has saddled itself with a tax-rate for education alone,

which is at present 37.9 mills on the dollar, and has been higher. In the same township the adjoining sections, less progressive, get along with rates of 9.5 and 7.1 mills, on an assessment levied on the same scale of valuation; the natural result of this is not only heart-burning, but a threatened exodus of the weaker brethren of No. 15, thus throwing a still heavier burden upon those who remain. In a community which is essentially one, why should there be this meaningless division by an arbitrary section-line which does not correspond even to a street, but which results in an artisan in one section paying \$50.00 for the education of his children and a similar artisan in an adjoining section paying \$9.37 on the same assessment?

In the early days of Ontario, little communities hacked out their farms from the forest; around the store, the smithy, the mill, the tavern, villages grew up, self-centred to an extent difficult now to realize. Men only recently dead have told me how they went to the University clad solely in the products of their father's farm. Such a community might be crude, but it had an individuality and a spirit of its own. Its school trustees were those of its inhabitants whose keenness led them to hire a school-master and to see that their boys frequented him more or less regularly. At its worst it might be sunk in a sordid ignorance inconceivable to-day; at its best it had a vigorous life of its own, a coherency which often centred around the school and the school-master.

All this has passed away; roads, railways, telegraphs, telephones, motor cars, departmental stores, rural mail delivery, daily newspapers have come. The drift from the country to the town is unceasing. Ontario has colonized the West, and has exhausted many of her rural municipalities in the process. She consists now not of a large number of isolated rural communities, villages, towns; she is a unity, which is yet highly differentiated into mining, farming, manufacturing, and residential areas. The School Section at its best was an arbitrary division; it is now a meaningless one.

What is the remedy for this artificial parcelling out of the province, which has resulted in excessive uniformity and in frequent inefficiency?

The consolidation of the weaker schools in the dying sections is being encouraged by the Department of Education. We may admit that one volunteer is better than two pressed men, and yet feel that the figures quoted above are sufficient proof that encouragement is not enough, and that the inertia and love of petty power of too many of the local trustees cannot be overcome except by a provincial act, which will force them to take their hands off the throats of teacher and of child. This has been the case in Great Britain, where the extinction of the local mandarins, and the establishment of larger

administrative areas with larger powers has been one of the chief benefits of the so-called Fisher Bill.

To remedy the defects in our system a large administrative unit, corresponding more nearly to the natural divisions of the Province, is an essential. We need a County Board, with wide powers of submitting to the Department modifications of curriculum to suit the locality, and of granting liberty of experiment to the more experienced and successful teachers under its control. Township Boards have been suggested; but the Township is too small, and has often ceased to have real individuality. A glance at the Municipal Statistics published by the Provincial Secretary's Department shows that Eastern Ontario has many townships whose total taxation barely exceeds \$2,000, of which about one-half is devoted to education. In determining our area we can hardly stop short of the county, or at least of the electoral division.

Happily the Quebec compromise has given us not one but nine systems of education. One shudders at the thought of a unified federal system, producing the same standardized little products all the way from Sydney to Victoria. But within the nine provinces over-standardization, that curse of democracy, is rife. In this varied province of Ontario, the schools in the mining districts of Sudbury or Haileybury differ but little from those in the agricultural districts of the western peninsula, in the great manufacturing centres, or in the pioneer settlements of the north. Our system of school sections forbids differentiation. Instead of a system supple and free, yielding to the curves and contours of the body politic, it gives us a system rigid and rasping; instead of teachers fitting their work to their pupils it constrains them to bind their pupils to a bed of Procrustes. Our last two Ministers of Education have both deserved well of the Province. Cody planted; R. H. Grant has watered; the time is ripe for an increase in the size of our administrative unit.

W. L. GRANT.

## Leaves from a European Note Book

### (I.) Russian Refugee Students—Prague

**S**NOW, black with age, lay in sheltered corners of the streets of Prague, the air was thick with smoke, and a grey sky hung low over the city. The street car made slow progress up a steep incline, past the wall of a cemetery over which could be seen battalions of crosses. My companion, a Russian refugee student who had served in a White army, had not spoken for a long time. He slouched in his seat, his eyes fixed on the crosses which seemed to jerk past the windows. When we reached the gateway, he said, 'We buried a friend of mine there last

week'. 'What was it?' I asked. He shrugged his shoulders.

'He killed himself. It was Easter Eve. We had gathered in the student barracks and sang songs. He sang very loudly. Next morning he was dead. It was poison.'

'Do you know why he took it?' I asked.

'A letter probably', he replied. 'We found in his pocket one from a sister; it said, "Our mother went out five days ago to look for food. She has not returned, so we know that she is dead. Your sister and I are in bed, too weak to move. When you receive this we too shall be dead. We thought you would wish to know." We do not look on life as you do', he added.

The car stopped at the top of the hill and we got out and found another going down a side street to an old theatre which has been given by the Czech Government as barracks for the Russian refugee students. We pushed open the door; the body of the theatre and the stage were a sea of beds; between them was scarcely room to step. Behind the beds were wooden bars with a peg for the possessions of each man. The place was full; some slept, others squatted on their beds, books or drawing-boards before them, trying to study. Some looked up and bowed, some paid no attention, others were ready to talk—French or English.

'I came from Constantinople', said one. 'The Government provides barracks, food, some clothing, and we are admitted to the Czech University. It is possible to continue our studies here. Perhaps two thousand of us receive this government ration. There are others without it; we are the fortunate ones.'

Another was reading a letter. He looked up.

'From Russia', he said. 'We get news occasionally, perhaps once in three months, those of us who have any one left to hear from. We would rather hear, yet it cannot be good news; it is better to know, yet we cannot do anything. We have nothing to send; we are not permitted to return. We cannot find work.'

Here is the tragedy—agony of mind about relatives in famine areas and inability to help.

'Would you go back?' I asked my guide.

'Good God! Yes', he replied. 'But I should be shot on the frontier if I tried.'

It was dark when we reached the hotel. 'Will you join me at tea?' I asked. My guide drew himself up and bowed low. 'With great pleasure I would sit with you', he said, 'but I require no refreshment.' Which being interpreted meant, 'I cannot receive hospitality which it is not in my power to return.' Again he bowed low and was lost in the dusk of the crowded street.

MARGARET WRONG.

## Echoes of the Miners' Strike in Nova Scotia

THE coal miners of Nova Scotia constitute the largest compact industrial community in Canada. The greater part of the twelve thousand miners of Nova Scotia live in a group of villages surrounding Glace Bay, Cape Breton. They have certain characteristics that distinguish them from the miners of Western Canada, and indeed from the industrial workers in any other district.

The majority of these are of Highland Scots origin. The forefathers of many were driven from their homes by the enclosure of the lands by the Scots landlords. As mining developed in Nova Scotia, the sons of the Scottish-Canadian farmers were drawn from the none too fertile farms of Cape Breton and their numbers reinforced by direct importations from the industrial districts of Scotland.

They are not foreigners and they are not transients. Born in Cape Breton, they think of Cape Breton as the home of their children. They have old-fashioned families of eight to twelve. The great majority are under the influence of the Church—either the Roman Catholic or the Presbyterian. Irrespective of religious affiliations they are all keen on education. Withal, they are thorough-going radicals—organized industrially—one hundred per cent. strong—United Mine Workers of America. They have applied for affiliation with the Red Trade Union International in Moscow.

Opposed to the miners' organization is the British Empire Steel Corporation—a huge trust with offices in Montreal—that controls the greater part of the industry of Nova Scotia and is believed by the miners and others practically to dominate the local legislature. In vain have the miners appealed to Halifax to obtain redress for some of their grievances. The statue of Joseph Howe stands in front of the legislative buildings, but the spirit of Howe is not in the legislative halls or in the administrative offices.

A great deal of indignation was worked up over the 'strike on the job' last Easter. Look at the situation from the miners' standpoint. The agreement had terminated. The Industrial Disputes Act stipulates that while a dispute is before the Board there shall be no change in wages. The operators, however, reduced wages on the technical ground that since there was no agreement there could be no dispute over the conditions of the agreement!

The men failing to secure redress through the courts took this ground: 'Very well, since the Company in violation of the spirit of the Industrial Disputes Act declares there is no agreement, and has reduced our wages, we will reduce our output.' In the debate in the House even Mr. Meighen recognized that the men had the better end of the argument. A fair day's work for a fair day's pay—conceded!



But what about a fair day's pay for a fair day's work?

About Easter, the mayors of the mining towns urged the Federal Government to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the coal mining industry of Nova Scotia. Surely not an unreasonable request! But it was refused. Later, however, when the men were on strike, the Federal Government, at the request of a Judge and in spite of the protest of the mayors, hurried troops into the Glace Bay district. The Premier says that under the B.N.A. Act he had no option. That is a matter for constitutional lawyers to decide. The miners ask, however, why the request made by the mayors for a Royal Commission should be refused, while the Company's request (preferred through a Justice) for a military force should be granted?

It is true that the Government, on the motion of the Labour members of the House, reconstituted the Industrial Disputes Act. As in so many Boards, the Government-named Chairman was in favour of the Company's position, and the decision did not give the men the relief they wanted. So, other means exhausted, they called the strike of last summer.

The press was given very scant details of this rather remarkable strike. Now that it is over and a new agreement signed, the men, though they call the present position simply a truce, are fairly well satisfied with their gains. In spite of wage reductions all over the continent, these miners, during the past six months, have pushed up the basic rate from \$2.44 to \$2.84 before the strike, and then to \$3.25. Wages in all departments have made a corresponding advance. Real wages are higher than ever before in the Nova Scotia coal fields. Further, the miners came through the struggle with their organization intact—no small consideration! It remains to be seen what action will be taken by the American officials of the United Mine Workers with regard to the radical policies of those at present in control of the local U.M.A. offices in Cape Breton.

The recent strike was a wonderful exhibition, not only of unified power but of self-control. The returned-soldier miners undertook to preserve order. They drilled pickets. 'No Scabs, and no Booze' was the order. Every vehicle entering the district was stopped and searched. The cars of business and professional men and officials were all investigated and then allowed to proceed in peace. The most daring performance was the holding up of the troop train. A flat-car piled high with sand-bags and mounted with a machine gun was pushed ahead as the train entered the mining district. Hundreds of miners, with their wives and children, massed themselves between the tracks. The train stopped. The pickets pushed past the soldiers who stood on the platform bayonets in hand, and proceeded to search the train for 'scabs' and 'booze'. No shot was fired.

No violence occurred. No 'scabs' or 'booze' being discovered, the train was allowed to proceed.

When the thousand soldiers barricaded themselves and the Company's property at Dominion No. 2 Mine, some fifteen hundred returned-soldier miners lined up and went through a series of military manoeuvres to demonstrate that they had not forgotten their army training. But there was no clash. On the way in the troop train hit an automobile and killed two men. On the way out it smothered a car load of horses. These were the only casualties.

The bills remain to be paid. There is also left a bitter resentment on the part of Nova Scotians that outside soldiers should have been sent to force them into submission.

Neither the Coal Company officials nor the miners will soon forget how completely the latter controlled the situation. The Company had to send in requests for supplies of coal that were necessary to keep certain machinery in operation. On one or two occasions the men showed a certain grim humour in sending word to the officials that their committee was very busy, but that 'if the officials could call to-morrow their requests would then be considered'. The arbitrariness of industrial autocracy is more responsible for industrial unrest than many outsiders imagine: here it was two-edged.

Now that the strike is over McLachlan, the Miners' Secretary, is devoting considerable attention to the establishment of a Labour College. Educational Clubs have already been organized and a committee formed to seek representation in the proposed Federated Maritime University. But that is another story.

Meanwhile, the miners have, so far, been baffled in their attempts to secure representation in the Federal House. But they are Scots and not to be beaten.

J. S. WOODSWORTH.

### Correspondence

THE CANADIAN FORUM had its origin in a desire to secure a freer and more informed discussion of public questions. Discussion is invited on editorials or articles appearing in the magazine or on any other matters of political or artistic interest. Conciseness, point, and good nature must be asked of correspondents, who should confine themselves to 800 words. The Editors are not responsible for matter printed in this column.

### A Point of Patriotism

To the Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.

Sir:

The other evening, while waiting in a garage, I fell into conversation with a man who was similarly unoccupied. We fell to discussing the makes and prices of cars. He said he could never understand why such a high tariff on automobiles was

maintained in this country. The price charged for the car assembled or manufactured in Canada was the American price plus duty plus freight, with a little more added for good measure. When it came to buying a car he was not impressed with the patriotic argument. In fact, he was inclined to think it more patriotic to buy an American car and pay the duty to the government than to buy a Canadian car and pay it to people whose one idea seemed to be to keep up the price of cars and capitalize the tariff to their own advantage.

He was in the baking business, he said. He had found, when he inquired in Buffalo, that he was selling his product for a little less than the price in Buffalo. Yet, if he were in business in Buffalo, he would be able to buy trucks for business, or a car for business and pleasure, at about two-thirds the Canadian price. The same thing was true of other articles he had to buy for his business, or of anything he wished to buy for his own enjoyment. He thought that if manufacturers continued their present policy of keeping up prices many people would decide to go to the States, where salaries and wages were quite equal to our own while prices of necessities and comforts were much lower. I asked him whether any other business men in Toronto thought as he did. He said a great many business men held that opinion, but did not feel free to express it. Was he right in his opinion, and are the urban fields ripening unto a Progressive harvest?

I enclose my card, sir, and beg to remain,

Yours, etc.,

FLIVVER.

### Knuckles and Gloves

THE English language, though in the hands of masters in all departments of thought and emotion it has abundantly proved itself capable of the widest range in adequate expression, is nowhere so full of truth and savour as when it deals with the more primitive exhibitions of human energy, such as the subject of Mr. Bohun Lynch's recent book on boxing.<sup>1</sup> He worthily follows a great tradition of our literature. Some of the very best things in English prose, as one of the most vigorous in Roman poetry—Virgil's match between Entellus and Dares in the fifth book of the *Aeneid*—have been inspired by this 'noble and manly sport'. There are several, for instance, in George Borrow, that typical Englishman and great writer, an Aeolian harp cut out of the inmost core of the old wholesome heart of oak. Then there is Hazlitt's famous essay; and there is the fight in *Rodney Stone*, written before Conan Doyle went soft and sat down by Babel's streams to pule with poor James Barrie—what saving health in all that carnal slugging compared with the recent slop of discarnate photographs! A good deal, too, there is to the same effect in George Meredith—for example, that delicious and most wise little man, as events have proved, in *One of Our Conquerors*; and the terrible struggle that so brutally, but with such lurid splendour, tested the mettle of Corinthia Jane in *The Amazing Marriage*.

Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose brilliant stupidity never deserts him when he touches on any of the

more vital manifestations of the English soul, does indeed, in respect of such deliverances, from the serene heights of his nut-nurtured supercerebrousness regard all these writers along with Shakespeare and Milton and Tennyson and Browning, as well as Nelson whose spirit works mightily in them, as mere pin-head-brained Patagonian black-beetles. To him boxing means merely a peculiarly gorily and brutally demonstrated destitution of logic. It is on a plane, as he rightly feels, with underdone roast beef and beer and that quaint 'sense of honour' so-called, so entirely without scientific justification, that sent British soldiers and sailors to the goose-song (to his ear) of fifes and hymns into the shark-infested or icy sea from the decks of the *Birkenhead* and *Titanic*. Boxing, he says, did not die, as is commonly said, of its blackguardism. On the contrary, 'it lived by its blackguardism, and died of its intolerable tediousness'. Any one who takes the trouble to read this book—though the present state of Canadian culture forbids the hope that many will—can scarcely fail to see that the question is not really so simple as to Mr. Shaw's bee-like geometric mind it seems to be. That is, if the great American School-Marm, whose ferociously sensitive immaculateness used to veil with 'pants' the all too corporal suggestiveness of a piano's 'limbs', has not bullied or whined out of him all power to look steadily and robustly at a somewhat rough concrete, and to discern and thrill to *virtue* there, that is to manhood, valour, the one root of all virtues whatever, whether in man or woman. He or she (I should particularly recommend this book to our new women-voters—if they could really enjoy it that would be a good omen for their fitness to discharge not only their new duties but, which is much more difficult, the old one) will, I think, see several things. First, that there is no bodily exercise which it is such a delight to the eye to watch, none that so brings to view the enchanting, musical, rippling play of muscle under the silky young skin, and offers such a variety of energetic and beautiful poses. Second, that there is none that conduces so much to developing the beauty of the body, or its health and fitness, of which Aristotle saw so clearly true beauty is merely the flower, as it were, and convincing evidence. Thirdly, that there is no other form of contest, the most interesting of all things, so interesting, so full of drama, so incalculable and sudden in its 'peripatetics', or giving such scope for skill and quick brain-work, and above all for pluck and indomitable will to win. Mr. Lynch's book is full of examples. Fourthly, there is no other such school of self-control. A boxer must, at all costs, learn to control his temper, else he is notoriously lost. And fifthly, there is no such school of endurance. St. Paul recognized that as well as a great many other things which the great American School-Marm has forgotten. When he wishes to get the strongest possible image to express

<sup>1</sup>*Knuckles and Gloves*, by Bohun Lynch (Collins; 15/-).

his ideal of fortitude in the prosecution of self-mastery and the Christian graces in general, he goes to boxing for his metaphor. 'I give myself a black-eye' (I. Cor. 9: 27), says the gallant little apostle of the prize-ring loving Greeks, in whose school he had learnt an appreciation of sport, and a great deal more besides, before he began to return to them their lessons with interest.

Boxing in itself, in short, has in many ways incomparable claims, except for those shivering spiritualists whose ultimate faith really is that the body is a mere disgrace and snare, that, as some old Pharisee out of his bitter hatred of all things Hellenic (the savage loathing of a people who don't wash for a people who do) pithily put it, 'Jehovah has no pleasure in the legs of a man'. But like many other things, such as horse-racing, card-playing, dancing, music, theatres, novels, beer and beef and tea, sugar and tobacco, it has the misfortune to fall within the compass of the vast crowd's enjoyment, the great untidy mass of mankind who don't as a rule get much enjoyment out of sermons. The manner of their enjoyment, therefore, is extremely likely to reflect their own grossness, and in order to produce satisfactory results would require careful regulation. That might come largely from the Church and the people who go there, if they had any adequate idea of what the Church should mean—ever since it gave up expecting this world to come to an abrupt conclusion any time within the next fortnight. But the Church, like the institution from which it descended and which it still too much resembles, the old Jewish Synagogue, simply washes its hands, for the most part, of all responsibility for such matters, and passes by on the other side. As for the State, no English-speaking community has ever yet been able to evolve a government fit to provide the sympathetic and yet rigorous regulation needful in such a case. Especially under the recent ultra-democratic regime this whole class of common amusements which have in them such great possibilities for the well-being and development of the people, as well as for the opposite, is apt to go wild. The supreme object of most politicians being the catching of votes, firm and wise direction of such popular pleasures becomes impossible. And so the real vice and curse of the English-speaking races, rich and poor, plumber and plutocrat, against which no watch-dog is bold enough to bark—the blood-thirsty greed of money and the child-like faith in its omnipotence—come in and rot them. Boxing, which ought to be and easily might be a noble sport and school of heroism, becomes a nest of rattle-snakes, book-makers, blackguards, and ruffians, and so with many such other things. And then Aunt Jane gets her chance.

Aunt Jane is a mightily spiritual power who has become the chief Divinity of the English-speaking race. She, along with Mammon and Billikens.

They have a niche at least in all the temples. Sometimes there is little else there. She is not very alluring to look at, this ancient and not very wise Virgin, this Prohibitive Pallas. She wears cork-screw curls, very clean and rigid starched pinafores, has the thinnest of straight-cut, close-fitting slits of lips, the palest of wintry eyes reinforced by steel-rimmed spectacles, likes sermons, and revels in funerals and sick-beds, faints at the sight of blood from the nose, or the smell of beer, and carries for her emblems instead of the spear and shield of old Britannia or Pallas Athene a bottle of grape-juice in her left hand and a loving-cup of international soothing syrup in her right.

This is the mighty *numen* that now steps in victoriously at the stage of decomposition above-described of inherently good and even necessary popular pleasures. She and her priests and prophets, whether to suit her numberless manifestations they bear the name of Wilson or Adams, Pussyfoot or Shaw, or Murray, or Sunday, or Scrymgeour, see their chance and clamour for the one cure she knows, poor old thing—namely, amputation. Sometimes she scores or seems to score a brief and devastating triumph. She kept most decent people of the middle classes in England from going to the theatre, and even to some extent from playing cards, for about a hundred and fifty years. She succeeded in making the theatre a monopoly of the rich whom she always lets do as they please, or the highly cultivated who know she is a mere scarecrow, and the blackguards. She succeeded thus for a long time, by cutting off from it what is after all the best life of our people, in degrading and reducing the stage of Shakespeare, the greatest glory of England, to an incredible insignificance. But she did not succeed in extirpating it and now she even goes there sometimes in a shame-faced way herself. She takes a hand at bridge, too, I am told. She is in the long run powerless against the great organs and expression of human civilization. She is forced ultimately like Balaam, and like him partly by the tardy recalcitration of the poor patient animal she rides so hard, to bless in a more or less grudging way what she set out to ban. I personally have no doubt that some will live to see her sipping a glass of beer with that greatly daring and half-apologetic smile of hers, that is enough to turn the hops to wormwood, in the intervals between the Acts at the bar of a Theatre, or even looking on from a well-secluded back seat at a boxing match. But what a devastating creature that sour-faced idol is. What monstrous toad-stools of hypocrisy and ruffianism flourish like green bay trees under the pestilent kill-joy shadow of her portentous old umbrella! And how that Gamp eclipses the gaiety of nations! How vast is the volume of wholesome and truly recreative pleasure of which she robs mankind! There has not been space to quote from Mr. Bohun Lynch. But one short quotation cannot be dispensed with. It is



the short poem in which he dedicates his book to his own little boy:

Though I deplore the pain you felt  
When you had broken my command,  
And I had taken you in hand,  
Planting my blows beneath your belt,  
I like to think of future years  
When skin that's fair shall change to brown,  
When 'listed in a fairer fight,  
You shall return to others' ears  
Blows straightly dealt with left and right,  
Blows you encountered lower down.

In these simple and sportive words there is a whole view of life—a right healthy view, absolutely and diametrically opposed to that etiolated super-fineness of parvenus, that prudery and shallow, callous sentimentality that is poisonously rife among us. Happy little boy to have a father whose playful tenderness can so express itself! How one would like to teach him Latin and, after a while, Homer and the Greek New Testament! One would count on foundations well and truly laid, which alas! too often are sadly to seek. For there are but few little boys indeed that have much force in them who can wholesomely dispense altogether with these 'blows beneath the belt' where nature has cunningly contrived a place for them which cannot easily suffer serious damage and yet may be the suffering seat of exquisite and most profitable pain. And when they grow old enough to have to hold their own with other boys, occasions can scarcely fail to arise in that fruitful commerce of young lives (which is not always productive of the most enduring good when it is most peaceful), occasions when the priceless tempering and steeling undergone over a wise parent's knee will be passed on by them to others in fair field without any loss, but rather with much gain of permanent goodwill and friendship and mutual respect. If England has many fathers like Mr. Bohun Lynch she need have no great fear either of Bolsheviks at home or of foreign enemies. Boys so brought up are the cement of our social structure. It was on these principles that Julian Grenfell was brought up, the best boxer in the British army, one of the most gallant of her unnumbered gallant soldiers who gave all in the Great War, and the author of by far the noblest poem in the English language which that War produced. Not out of softness or spotless pinafores in youth do the richest and fairest, nor even the sweetest and tenderest fruits of the spirit come. 'The shepherd in Virgil', says Dr. Johnson, 'at last found Love, and found he was a native of the rocks.'

JOHN MACNAUGHTON.

## Poems

By E. J. Pratt

### The History of John Jones

The sun never shone,  
The rain could not fall  
On a steadier man than John.  
A holy man was John,  
And honest withal.

His mates had never heard  
Drop from his guarded lip  
An idle word,  
But twice;—first, while on board his ship,  
When he had lost his pipe, he swore,  
Just a mild damn, and nothing more;  
And once he cursed  
The government—but then he reckoned  
The Lord forgave him for the first,  
And justified the second.

And he was temperate in all his ways,  
Was John;  
He never drank, but when Thanksgiving days  
Came on;  
Never in summer on a fishing trip  
Would he allow the smell on board his ship;  
Only in winter or in autumn,  
When a cramp or something caught him,  
Would he take it, for he prized it,  
Not for its depraved abuses,  
But for its discreeter uses,  
As his Church had authorized it.

The sun had never shone  
On a kinder man than John,  
Nor upon  
A better Christian than was John.  
He was good to his dog, he was good to his cat,  
And his love went out to his horse;  
He loved the Lord and his Church, of course,  
For righteous was he in thought and act;  
And his neighbours knew, in addition to that,  
He loved his wife, as a matter of fact.

Now one fine day it occurred to John,  
That his last great cramp was on,  
For nothing that the doctor wrote  
Could stop that rattle in his throat;  
He had broken his back upon the oar,  
He had dried his last boat-load of cod,  
And nothing was left for John any more  
But to drift in his boat to the port of God.

**A Student's Prayer at an Examination**

Thou knowest, Lord, my term is brief,  
Vouchsafe a small request,  
Before I leave this place of grief,  
And enter into rest.

Somewhere or other I have heard  
A kind professor mention—  
Maybe he read it in Thy Word  
That honours the intention,

I know not—that Thou wilt not weigh  
Within Thy balances,  
Such failures as are mine to-day  
That spring from weariness.

Heed Thou the impulse of my mind  
Which led me into College,  
That Thou wouldst help Thy servant find  
A substitute for knowledge.

And when, my course on earth being run,  
And my ambition spent,  
I go with all my work undone  
To join Thy firmament;

I crave to shine among Thy stars,  
Chief of the luminaries,  
And note Professors, Registrars—  
My humble lapidaries.

**In Lantern Light**

I could not paint, nor could I draw  
The look that searched the night,  
The bleak refinement of the face I saw  
In lantern light.

A cunning hand might seize the crag,  
Or stay the flight of a gull,  
Or the rocket's flash; or more—the lightning jag  
That lit the hull.

But as a man born blind must steal  
His colours from the night  
By hand—I had to touch that face to feel  
It marble white.

**The Shark**

He seemed to know the harbour,  
So leisurely he swam,  
His fin,  
Like a piece of sheet-iron  
Three-cornered,  
And with knife-edge,  
Stirred not a bubble  
As it moved  
With its base-line on the water.

His body was tubular  
And tapered  
And smoke-blue,  
And as he passed the wharf  
He turned,  
And snapped at a flat-fish  
That was dead and floating.  
And I saw the flash of a white throat,  
And a double row of white teeth,  
And eyes of metallic gray,  
Hard and narrow and slit.

Then out of the harbour,  
With that three-cornered fin  
Shearing without a bubble the water,  
Lithely,  
Leisurely,  
He swam,—  
That strange fish  
Tubular, tapered, smoke-blue,  
Part vulture, part wolf,  
Part neither—for his blood was cold.

**The Choir Invisible**

SANCTA SOPHIA is in Constantinople, and as that city is much in the world's mind at present, Cromer and I felt like a pair of publicists in having to think about 'that marvellous and costly temple, cleft St. Sophie'. Of course, we felt that the world's mind would be easier if it could, or would, think more of Sancta Sophia and less of Constantinople, for in spite of many modern 'art exasperations', art is a great unifier of peoples. Question most of your friends from China to Peru, and you will find that they have clipped the same colour-plates from the same art magazines, or have read the same poems or seen the same movies, and have a perfecting sympathy accordingly. Cromer's thoughts are free and loose like his English homespun clothes. He says, 'Make the world safe for Democracy by making it so jolly beautiful that a bally Democrat will feel at home anywhere'.

Cromer and I seemed to be headed for a job—a 'commission' I suppose it should be called in the dignified language of diplomacy and fine art. Years ago we had met the Rev. Paul Luther Morell who had talked to us about the future decorations of his church, and we had promised to aid him with advice when he wanted it. Now his debt was about paid; he wanted another to carry, as exercise for his people. He had dreams of making his church a little Sancta Sophia—not too 'Sancta', of course, as his moneyed men are mostly Orangemen, who have a restricted idea of colour or display—but bright, clear, colourful, attractive, some gold and

silver, a few angels, and enough rich starry ornament and symbolism. The Rev. Paul is a good Canadian and is training his flock in the way it should go, but apparently he does not know that good Canadians do not get their mural decorating done at home. He seems never to have heard that Winnipeg, for instance, got the mural decorations for its fine new Legislative Buildings from England and New York, and that none of the important decorations of the new Parliament Buildings in Ottawa have been designed or painted in Canada, though it is true that some of them were made by Canadians living in New York. For the Rev. Paul this matter of art and life is simple enough. 'You may build up or along, but you must *build*. Art begins at home. People grow by expression. A Parish Church, a Sunday School, a Public Library, a building subdivision, are all instruments of expression for those needing them or making them. Fair talent is at hand. It will improve with use. None need be in ignorance of good standards. Let us put ourselves to work.' So the rector has had art dreams of his little Sancta Sophia in the west. The building is there, complete and used now for a dozen years or more, but it needs adornment and Cromer and I were to see it before beginning sketches and estimates.

'We shall have to steep ourselves in Byzantine', said Cromer, as we got off the car, but just then the fall clouds were heavy overhead with cold blue openings in the north. The maple leaves were flattened to the pavement with a pouring shower, and we rushed for the church porch where an old man in his shirt sleeves was sweeping the fallen leaves out of the corners. He was Midland English, apparently, not Cockney; but it was autumn with his accent, for he was dropping his h's like the leaves, and putting them back in the wrong places.

Inside the church, Cromer and I walked up and down and across. We sat in the pews and imagined our angels leaning forward in the curving spandrils of the dome. 'We must get the spirit of Byzantine', said Cromer, 'and not merely copy it. We must work in Canadian motifs, the trillium and other flowers and leaves, and not necessarily the peacock (though he's a bully bird for decoration) or the hares, goats, vultures, pheasants and sheep of the Byzantines, but a little zoo of our own, hawks, blue jays, robins, wild ducks, orioles, deer, moose, beaver and squirrels. Insight can give all those things a fine meaning, even if they are not traditional.'

Paul Luther's church had begun to show the effect of twelve Canadian winters and summers pulling against each other. The plaster of his arches was cracked, and his columns were split in places, but they could be repaired and the surfaces evened. And as we sat there we recalled one of the legends of the settling and cracking of the first Sancta Sophia, and the despair of the builders, who

would have given up but for the assurance of the Emperor—Justinian, was it?—who encouraged them to complete the dome which would strengthen and support itself, when finished. And so it stands to-day rounded in cloudy blue 180 feet above the pavement, where, as they tell us, 'the 6,000 lamps are lighted for the solemn services of Ramazan'. Then we had seen something of the Homeric poem of Paulus the Silentiary on the church, a sort of poetical specifications of the whole structure from foundations to roof. 'From the Lydian creek came the bright stone mingled with streaks of red . . . never were such columns, blooming with many-hued brightness, hewn from the craggy hills of sea-washed Molossis.' And there was the detailed praise of Procopius. 'The stones are fastened together not with lime, nor with asphaltum, the boast of Semiramis at Babylon, not anything of the kind, but with molten lead which, poured into the interstices, has sunk into the joints, binds them together, and this is how they are built.'

So we sat and remembered and talked over our plans to the sound of the showers outdoors, and the shrilling of the vacuum cleaner which the old caretaker pushed up and down the red carpet of the aisles. When he came near he stopped the current of his cleaner and began to talk about his work while he rested and wiped his brow. 'This is the place to keep a man agoing. Hall the week I'm hat it. Hall these haisles to do. Parish 'all as well. Vestry, choir room, mother's meetin' room, horphan's gallery. Hi tell you a chap 'as to plan and push along.' We had to tell him of our decorations, and we spoke of the cracks in the arches. 'Hah', he said, 'there's a bit o' work that shows 'ow they do things in this country. Hits a wonder the hole harch and dome hisn't down. Hi can show you hup there in the dome where the beams is honly spiked together', (and he demonstrated on pew backs) 'hinstead o' bein' checked hout and bolted through, they're honly spiked with six hinch nails, which are drawn away from the huprights. No wonder there's cracks and splits in the plaster. My son was a ship carpenter in the hold country, and when Hi take 'im up in the dome with me to fix the lights he says, "Father, ther's some work up 'ere that'll take a bit o' lookin' into.'" The Rev. Morell's little Sancta Sophia certainly has its Paulus and Procopius.

We thought we would like to see the anatomy of this exemplary dome. He was proud to take us up for he had wired it and put ladders in place and improved the passage-ways. 'Mind you, hits a bit of a squeeze. You'll 'ave to take hoff your coats, but you're both younger than Hi ham.' So up we went, flattening ourselves in behind the fanning-mill contraptions of the organ and crawling at various angles up step-ladders and over the scantling and lath of the dome-curves, following the old man's



voice, 'Old tight', 'Steady to the left', 'Don't put your foot through the lath', 'Climb by the scantlin', until we came to the top of the dome, where he sat down. He pointed up to one side and said, 'You can go on up outside there right hup to the cross.' But we had gone high enough on our Calvary for the time, and the roof was drumming above us with another shower. So we held on to bolt and brace and balanced ourselves on the edges of scantling to avoid making a descent from the clouds into the church below, while our Procopius pointed out the faulty beams, and showed us the windlass he had rigged to draw up the electric chandelier. We praised his skill and he said, 'Hah, Hi didn't spend thirty years of my life at sea for nothink', and Cromer told him about the beams of a house he had recently lived in in England, built in 1150, and sound and strong now. 'Ay, ay, that's the way we do things hover there', said the old captain, sitting on the scantlings by his windlass in the shadows.

It was more of a slide going down, but we landed safely and had to be taken into the basement to wash up, where our friend apologized for having no towels for us. 'Hi 'ave honly the cloths what Hi uses to wipe the front steps with, but they're wrung out clean.' Then he had to 'push along' back into the church, and the cleaner began its shrill hum again. We looked at the War Memorial on the wall of the nave, and deplored the sort of thing we are leaving to posterity. Bad design, poor lettering, cheap material and workmanship, these are some of the art qualities we have consecrated to the memory of our soldiers. 'Putrid', said Cromer, with apologies to Sancta Sophia. And a quotation from a recent article by St. John Ervine on 'Great Deeds and Great Art' will bear him out, though the writer is speaking of England where the War Memorials are generally better than here. 'Is it not astounding to observe the inadequacy of the War Memorials to represent the spirit of those who took part in the war. . . Surely, we ask, the common sorrow of mankind must find expression in monuments worthy of it. . . If we turn from the memorials to the dead, to the medals for the living, what are we to think of the creative impulse stirred by the war when we look at the Service Medal and the Victory Medal each of which might have been given away with a pound of inferior chocolates?' Perhaps the merit of Canada's great memorial now in the making by the sculptor Walter Allward will atone for the faults of a myriad smaller ones, but let us improve the smaller ones where we may. Paul Luther Morell has his eye on this also.

I am sure our sailor friend was 'pushing along' to give us a treat. His cleaner was not the only musical instrument in the place. We were considering the chancel roof and the altar and altar plate.

'Putrid', again the echoes whispered, when our friend came up, as though to attend to the organ. He unlocked it, and laid back the cover, and showed us the three key-boards and the rows of stops, like the directory in a celestial apartment-house, bearing the names of angels, Dulcet, Viola, Céleste, Melodia, Æoline, and a heavenly host. And he sat down on the bench. 'Helectric blowed', he said, and pushed a button and the wind began to stir. 'Now she's in haction', and he pulled his sleeves further up, and ran his fingers over the keys. What a spirit to rise at the touch of a pair of old tattooed sailor hands!

And to our high-raised phantasy present,  
That undisturbed song of pure content  
Aye sung before the sapphire coloured throne  
To Him that sits thereon.

The music was only a simple hymn, and a few runs, but how we did enjoy its reedy modulations. We thought that churches ought to be built and decorated, if only as roofs for organs. And our old man played with his head on one side, and a rapt look up to the cracked arches. If only the notes could lay the colour on those decorations for us! That would be Neo-Byzantine indeed. 'Hit would take a chap a lifetime to learn hall the stops', he said, as he drew a few and called up some more angels. Then he rang the chimes, and gave us the cathedral peal shaken out breezily over English daisy fields and he gave us the softest breathing processional tones the organ could make.

His listening brethren stood around,  
And wondering on their faces fell  
To worship that celestial sound.

But they wanted more, and I asked for the loudest effect he could give us. But who should ask an artist to make such a quick transition? With his nose up and head on one side our old man signified that he was coming to it. He made the gradations, 'oly, 'oly, 'oly', and then, prodding underneath with his feet and spreading his hands, he said, 'Full horgan', and rolled us out a dome-cracking undulating thundering of 'God Save the King'.

Then he had to 'push along', and close up his heaven. 'You should come and 'ear Mr. Grand, our horganist, when he gives 'is recital. 'E's goin' to play a piece called Finland, a wonderful piece that was forbidden to be played by the Kzar of Russia on account of it stirrin' up the people.' Cromer and I are going, but we're afraid that even Mr. Grand and 'Finland' will not enable us to recapture the first fine careless rapture roused by our friend. We have a new ideal in life. Between decorating 'commissions' we'd like to have jobs as caretakers in the house of the Lord, with liberty to play the 'horgan' when not 'pushing along'.

J. E. H. MACDONALD.

### W. H. Hudson—The Writer

IN his first book Hudson tried to put to use the human side of his forty years' spiritual contact with Nature and Man in the Argentine. *The Purple Land* reveals its author's artistic sense of form, his feeling for temperament, and above all the gift of narrative. All Hudson's best work is embodied in narrative: Romances, Lives, Short Stories—and here you see the artist; Phantasies, Fables, Improvizations—and here it is the anthropologist, or rather the primitive savage, practising his world-old mythopoeic art. But his method is always the same: he emptied his mind first of all its contents, focussed every faculty on the special point, and then waited like a crystal-gazer till the vision came. This, he tells us, is the way to study adders, and the way he wrote his story of *Dead Man's Plack*. In his fondness for psychological subtleties, Hudson reminds one of Browning. They both loved, after a kind of trephining operation, to play Tom Peep on the mind at work. Browning preferred to act the surgeon to other people; Hudson usually bored holes in his own head. Whose is the truer record of what he saw?

But at forty-two Hudson was still the boy of ten who in roaming the Pampas wholly preoccupied with birds, 'occasionally came to meet with human beings, and even to take an interest in some of them'. He hated modern civilization so profoundly that it was only among the Gauchos and Indians of La Plata that he found himself happy, or their fellows in England, the little children, the peasants, and shepherds of the countryside. His better known romances of *A Crystal Age* and *Green Mansions* are never-never lands of the spirit, east of the sun and west of the moon, where man has shed the *exuviae* of sex and passion or caught the aerial spirit and melody of a bird.

*A Crystal Age*, written a year after *The Purple Land*, is the first book in which Hudson's great gift of imagination shows itself; it is full of sensuous beauty, a revel in melodious sound and harmonies of colour, form, and motion. *Green Mansions* is its natural child, but far above it. This was written on the full tide of *Birds and Man*, *El Ombu*, and *Hampshire Days* when Hudson was at his very best; and in the forest drama of Rima the bird-maiden, his passionate love of nature and avian life finds lyric utterance.

Had *The Purple Land* succeeded Hudson might have become a sort of Conrad of the Argentine, but fortunately it failed. By the reviewers it was either ignored or given a passing reference under Books of Travel, a cave of Adullam (like Sociology) for all sorts and conditions of books skimmed hastily over. In a sense it was a book of travel, like the immortal works of John Bunyan, Cervantes, or Le Sage; come to think of it, the mercurial Richard Lamb, galloping

into the arms of Romance at every turn along the winding road of his amazing adventures in New Spain, is not unlike a second Gil Blas of Santillane. But the best comment on *The Purple Land* came from the author's brother in Cordova of the Argentine: the book was not unreadable, but Hudson must be perfectly aware that this was not his line—the one thing he could do supremely well; let him come back to the land of his birth and make a life study of its birds and other fauna. Hudson tells us he felt the truth of his brother's criticism, but the die was cast; England, the home of his ancestors, was to be his home for the rest of his life.

Hardly had Hudson launched his first two romances, than he was at work on his *Argentine Ornithology*. This was published at the end of the 'eighties and established his reputation as one of the foremost naturalists in Europe. From the time he was fifteen he had kept his field notes carefully written up in diaries, so accurately that he was able in manhood to identify many of the rare flowers, insects, and birds discovered in early boyhood. This magnificent set of bird memoirs has recently been re-issued as *Birds of La Plata*. It was soon followed by *The Naturalist in La Plata* and *Idle Days in Patagonia*.

It needs no more than a single glance at this series to realize that Hudson had at last 'found himself', and a second glance to show that it was in the less pretentious sequel rather than the systematic study that his true *métier* lay. Splendid as *Birds of La Plata* is, especially when you remember that much of it represents his boyish discoveries, it will not stand comparison with either *The Naturalist in La Plata* or such a book as the later *Birds and Man*.

Devoted solely to birds and in the form of separate descriptions it lacks atmosphere. Indeed it almost stands condemned for the very fault its own author finds with museums: the birds are taken out of their environment; and though they certainly live (and, above all, *sing*) in Hudson's marvellous pen-portraits and character sketches, the general effect is of an art gallery of pictures, each framed separately and often with little or no background. More serious still is the restraint imposed on the writer; his personality has no chance; he can't let himself go; now on the subject of birds, Hudson's whole being was roused to the pitch of passion; his emotions and sensibilities must have free play. Artist as he was and obedient to the sense of form in every style of his writing, in these cramped vignettes he bursts his bonds again and again in a kind of agony, and description becomes story. This union of anecdote with portrait appears early in vol. 1, in such studies as 'The White-Banded Mocking-bird' and 'The House Wren'.

Readers of *Far Away and Long Ago* will remember how greatly the Carancho or Carrion Hawk impressed



CHURCH BY THE SEA,  
NOVA SCOTIA;

BY

J. E. H. MACDONALD, A.R.C.A.



Hudson as a child; they will also remember a surprising discovery he made in boyhood about the Cowbird, that triumph of his bird watchings which threw him into transports of delight. The proper way to learn, Hudson warns us again and again, is to learn emotionally—what we *feel* we see. The *Birds of La Plata* provides a curious comment on this text of Hudson's, because of what he does with the Carancho and the Cowbird, or rather what they do with him. The book consists of some two hundred pen-portraits of birds, ranging from one to three pages in length; but the two species of Carrion Hawk, with sail and sweep and sudden stoop, have driven every bird to cover through all the length and breadth of twenty-nine pages; while the Cowbirds play their little game of cuckoo, mimic, and dupe, through forty-four pages, including extracts from the original diary.

These two articles in fact mark the turning-point in Hudson's career as a nature-writer: in form they anticipate, in spirit they are, the opening chapters of *The Naturalist in La Plata*. Here Hudson makes an immense stride forward. The narrative *draws* in a way description never could, and the range is as wide as all nature. Few writers can equal Hudson in the power of imparting to a scene what is really a kind of fourth dimension, the spiritual glamour we call atmosphere. This is admirably done both here and in the last book of the sequence, *Idle Days in Patagonia*. Moreover, it is in these volumes that we get our first glimpses of Hudson's remarkable personality. Few readers but will agree how engaging these will-o'-the-wispish gleams of the man between the lines of his story are, especially in the familiar undress of his later and mellow years.

It has a fascination almost uncanny, to watch the emergence of the Hudson we all love in the sequence of these three books, uncoiling and basking in the sun, limbering and glistening under the warm rays. To find Hudson's best work we must look for what he could do better than any one else; and this surely lies not in the more pretentious chapters of *The Naturalist in La Plata* where he tries conclusions with Darwin and Wallace, but where he indulges the Hudson genius, as in 'Music and Dancing in Nature' and still more throughout the *Idle Days in Patagonia*. And when his rare personality gleams forth in beauty of style and imaginative touch, memories, conscious and unconscious, of half the poets' poetry in the English tongue, who that reads can escape the charm?

In the same year as *Idle Days in Patagonia* appeared the first of Hudson's books on English birds; he published it with great diffidence, but it was beautifully done, quite the best of the three in its sequence—*Birds in a Village*, *British Birds*, and *Birds in London*; as in *Birds of La Plata* the form of the second cramped him; in the third he was chilled by bricks and mortar. But no sooner was this finished than he began a second series with *Birds and Man*,

completed many years later by *Adventures among Birds* and *Birds in Town and Village*, the last an enlargement of his maiden effort. This second sequence Hudson never surpassed in the interpretation of his well-beloved kinsmen of the air. He could not be commonplace, but birds awoke all the poet and the lover in him; in these books he is at his happiest, thoroughly at home and himself; crisp, fresh, piquant, and sweet with their happy blend of rich lore, ripe fruity thought, and tender insight, garnished moreover with a generous sprinkling of anecdote, *Birds and Man* and *Adventures among Birds* have all the ingredients of a most delectable salad for bird lovers.

The only possible criticism on such work comes from Hudson himself. Into the very middle of *Birds and Man* he foists a chapter on the charm of wild flowers (a deliciously controversial chapter! one of those golden apples of discord he loved to send rolling at the feet of the experts); and he does it with the remark that there's one fault about bird-books—they have too much about birds. For this reason Hudson's next work was far greater, both more difficult and a greater triumph; no less than to paint a whole county with its *flora* and *fauna* even to man and his hamlets, and give it an atmosphere, 'the light that never was on land or sea'; this he did in *Nature in Downland*, *Hampshire Days*, and *The Land's End*.

I cannot help thinking that in *Hampshire Days*, if not in *Nature in Downland*, with the sole exception of *Far Away and Long Ago*, we have Hudson's greatest work. This was his favourite county, the seat of White's Selborne, of the New Forest, of Beaulieu Abbey and the old barrows where he wished once he might find burial; the scene of *Dead Man's Plack*, of his cuckoo triumph, his grasshopper minstrels, his happiest discoveries, and his happiest memories; above all, in his own words, 'that county richest of all in wild life which continually calls me back from all others, east, west, and north, to its heaths and forests and rivers'. When he dedicated his book to the Greys as 'Northumbrians with Hampshire written in their hearts', we know that its image dwelt in his soul too; and when his heart was stirred how should his genius not transcend itself?

Those who complain of *Nature in Downland* or *Hampshire Days* that it lacks human interest, surely make a strange mistake; far better complain that a landscape of Turner's lacks human interest; they've forgotten the artist. To me it is a passionate work, instinct with human feeling, because I see from first to last a lonely form with eager, questing, wistful looks, beneath whose brooding spirit all these scenes grow warm with life and beauty. A strangely moving spectacle, the sojourner from far away come back to the home of his ancestors to reveal the hidden springs of Nature, striding the land like some dowser, divining-rod in hand.

He found Cornwall, he confesses, disappointing in its lack of wild life; but determined apparently to make the best of a bad job, he fell back on the Cornish folk. *The Land's End* leads by an easy transition to his sequence of human studies—*Afoot in England*, *A Shepherd's Life*, and the sketches of *A Traveller in Little Things*. So set, *A Shepherd's Life* towers like a giant tor above the clustered knolls and scattered combs of these slighter portraits. It seems at first sight to challenge comparison with Hardy's Wessex worthies; but they belong to a different world. It was Hudson's genius to interpret rather than create; when he worked in romance, he gave us Yolettas and Rimas, not Bathsheba or Tess; his Gabriel Oak is Caleb Bawcombe. To rank *Green Mansions* above *Hampshire Days* and *A Shepherd's Life* is to forget that Hudson was a naturalist.

The study of the Wiltshire shepherd is Hudson's triumph in objective psychology, but it is not his masterpiece. That title belongs beyond dispute to *Far Away and Long Ago*. For spiritual insight this autobiography of the boy naturalist is unsurpassed in all our language. As a feat of memory alone it would have been to most an utter impossibility; but it came to Hudson on his sickbed all in a moment and without effort.

Though Hudson was seventy-five when he published this wonderful book, his spiritual vision remained undimmed, his mental vigour unabated. In rapid succession appeared *The Book of a Naturalist*, *A Traveller in Little Things*, *Dead Man's Plack and An Old Thorn*; then in the sunset glory of *A Hind in Richmond Park*, suddenly, in his sleep, he was gone.

FRANK MORRIS.

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### The Bookshelf An English Poet

*Last Poems*, by A. E. Housman (Grant Richards; 5/-).

Mr. A. E. Housman, silent since 1896 when he published his first poems, *A Shropshire Lad*, has now given us his *Last Poems*. It is a very small volume, containing only forty-one short poems; about a quarter of these were written, he tells us, in April, 1922, and the rest between 1895 and 1910. He says he will write no more, and we must reluctantly believe him for here at the end of the book is his characteristic farewell to poetry. Moreover, the poems in these two volumes make one perfect piece of work—and it had to be finished.

Those who liked *A Shropshire Lad* will like this book also; those who thought that gloomy, and resented its hard, strong clarity, will find no softer sentiment, no smoother prophecy, here. Yet it is not unlikely that to some people what seemed pessimism at the end of the 19th century will now appear to be the very gentleness of truth. The words of such a man mingled discordantly with the preparations for the great Year of Jubilee; then, of course, we emphatically refused to believe that the world has much less good than ill in it, and we scoffed at the thought of training for ill and not for good. He simply replied:

'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale  
Is not so brisk a brew as ale:  
Out of a stem that scored the hand  
I wrung it in a weary land.  
But take it: if the smack is sour,  
The better for the embittered hour.

Now in 1922, there are perhaps more of us who would rather take this, than any sweeter stuff.

Here, for example, in a few words—not much more than a breath long—there is caught that un-resting spirit, which goes up and down among the sons of men in the days of their misery and bondage, and kindles them to a fine anger and resentment and despair.

The laws of God, the laws of man,  
He may keep that will and can;  
Not I: let God and man decree  
Laws for themselves and not for me;

And how am I to face the odds  
Of man's bedevilment and God's?  
I, a stranger and afraid  
In a world I never made.

There is no fine frenzy in this poetry; never for a single moment is the poet drunk with 'liquor, love or fights'. His strength and his power rest entirely on his sobriety; it is only at those moments when he thinks, 'fastening his hand upon his heart', that he writes his poetry. He writes always in a mood of disenchantment, and he should not be read at such times as we wish deliberately to be cheerful and thoughtless; he is no fit companion if we are making

merry with our friends; but in the excitement of disillusion his rhymes beat insistently upon the brain, and it is subdued to the music of his irony. We are forced to listen with a new embittered anguish to the tale of human mortality. The great commonplaces of poetry—the shortness of this unrelenting span of life and the unbroken quiet of the grave—which in the early poems were the background for a hope that life would yet allow a little space for the enjoyment of earth's beauty and the warm loyalties of comradeship with men of flesh and bone, remains here as the setting for the memory of earth's kindness and the friendships that have been.

Wide is the world, to rest or roam,  
And early 'tis for turning home:  
Plant your heel on earth and stand,  
And let's forget our native land.

When you and I are spilt on air  
Long we shall be strangers there;  
Friends of flesh and bone are best:  
Comrade, look not on the west.

And the tale is perfectly told. His manner of speech is direct and exact, in tone and gesture always admirable. He has that supreme mastery of language, that fine sense of form, which is possessed only by the man who is at the same time a scholar and a poet. We see in these poems no trace of that muscular power with which Mr. Hardy seems to have forced his words into their places, where they stand like rebels still frowning; here are found none who have not given willing obedience to their master. It is impossible not to compare with the work of Mr. Hardy a poem such as this:

He stood, and heard the steeple  
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.  
One, two, three, four, to market-place and people  
It tossed them down.

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,  
He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;  
And then the clock collected in the tower  
Its strength, and struck.

But that is not the only kind of success Mr. Housman has achieved. He has written lyrical ballads in the actual language of simple men. He has overcome the difficulty which Wordsworth found so hard to deal with. For he has managed to preserve not merely the words, but the order and rhythm of ordinary simple speech. No. XI and No. XIV of the *Last Poems* are almost perfect examples of this, and elsewhere we constantly meet lines such as these:

The young man feels his pockets  
And wonders what's to pay.

or these:

And if they think, they fasten  
Their hands upon their hearts.

and perhaps even more frequently in *A Shropshire Lad* he was content to use unchanged the music of

ordinary speech. It is this which gives his work its fine flavour. Such forms of speech are timeless—neither new nor old—and common, with the mark of no dialect or cult upon them. They are the bones of language, and are not subject to the accidents and mortality which quickly destroy the beauty of flesh and brain. They give to his works that shape which by its firm solidity is endowed with the quality of permanence.

H. J. DAVIS.

*The Judge*, by Rebecca West (McClelland and Stewart; \$2.00).

Certainly one of the fine novels of 1922. It is one of those rare novels which are thoughtful on every page without ever becoming theoretical or tractarian. The binding of generation to generation, the tragic possibilities in a situation where keen intelligence meets intense emotion, these ideas are present throughout the book. But the particular fate of two women, and especially the initiation into real life of one woman during her eighteenth year, is the absorbing interest.

Rebecca West has created a real character in Ellen, who is delightfully different from the usual self-conscious heroine of present-day fiction. Ellen's interests are all outside herself. There is no posing, or introspection, or self-analysis. Like the author of the book she is intellectual in the most humane sense of the word; that is to say, she naturally uses her mind as well as her senses and feelings in all her everyday life. The first half of the book shows the full promise of Ellen's life. Her own bright intelligence seems to be shaping her destiny for a glorious future. Everything builds up towards a happy fulfilment. But the moment that she leaves the intellectual north country for the more sentimental south sees the beginning of the end. Richard's mother stands for all the weakening, disintegrating forces of lethargic suffering, brooding memory, stifling and wholly possessive love. The fire of the first half of the book is, as it were, extinguished by the dark waters of the Essex river in the second. The negative is stronger than the positive; Marion's unhappiness blots out the joy of Ellen and Richard, and all ends in misery.

It must be admitted that the author is on surer ground in the first half of the book than in the second. Ellen's life in Edinburgh is known intimately by her, but Essex remains a strange land to Ellen and to Rebecca West. In the first half we are in a real land, meeting real people, and experiencing real weather, but in the second half we are in a book, where much is vague and shadowy and 'literary'. Marion is not quite alive, and her home was not built of bricks and mortar, but of words. It would be interesting to challenge Rebecca West to bring Marion to Edinburgh instead of taking Ellen and





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Richard into Essex. Could Marion even then have dominated, and turned hope into despair? Psychologically this would make the problem far more interesting. As it stands, the novel passes from the light of clear day to an atmosphere of almost obscurantist romance. But, after all, the excellence of the first part is enough to give *The Judge* an honourable place among modern novels.

M. A. F.

*The Cathedral*, by Hugh Walpole (Doran; \$2.00).

Mr. Walpole has written a Greek tragedy and staged it in a small cathedral town in the Victorian era. In the now well-established 'Walpolian' method, the story has for theme a philosophical criticism of certain human tendencies developed in a style of riotous impressionistic symbolism. I know of no modern writer with anything like Mr. Walpole's facility in creating an atmosphere; and so potent an atmosphere that it not only overwhelms the characters but stretches out and overwhelms the reader, at any rate while reading. It is usually an atmosphere of domination in which either a person or a tradition 'runs amok,' over-shadowing, absorbing, and perverting most of those who come within its course. With this *motif* the characters fall inevitably into two classes: those abandoned to an obsession and those struggling against it as an alien domination.

In this book it is the cathedral and what it stands for in dead tradition, in ceremony and formality and in materialism, which is the dominating element, absorbing human life and energy into a power 'neither of God or man'. This is the atmosphere and emotional background of the story and the note is struck again in the central action which concerns the temporary dominance and final fall of the hero. The Archdeacon is on the straight line of tragic heroes, successful, lovable, and with a fatal weakness for power: and he runs the usual course of tragic heroes; first, given the taste of power, then made drunk with power, and then, in his drunkenness, destroyed by the jealous gods. The last part of the book where we see him attacked on all sides, broken in body and mind, his hold on his faculties becoming daily more hectic and more spasmodic, is fine heroic writing. His final defeat on a question of church politics when the chapter unanimously vote against him is raised far beyond the level of a mere parochial controversy by the implication that in defeating—and thereby killing—the champion of the old order the victors have, though unconsciously, struck a blow at the whole regime of materialism. As usual, Walpole conveys a dual impression; on the one hand, that men are puppets of powers beyond their comprehension working through them; on the other, that, though puppets, they can and do set in motion forces far beyond their control.

As has been indicated, the author makes his impression and creates his atmosphere, leaving you with a rather frightened perception of human futilities inter-acting with vast powers. But the thought is not an especially subtle one and the impression is fleeting. A few minutes out of the atmosphere you feel a little cheated and realize that while you have assisted at a very cunningly contrived scene with unusually lavish stage hangings the play is now over and leaves little to reflect upon. *The Cathedral* gives an excellent attack of atmosphere on one reading, but would not, I fancy, 'take' a second time.

R. M. H.

*The Altar Steps*, by Compton MacKenzie (Doran; \$1.75).

This is the first volume of a trilogy to be called 'The Parson's Progress' and, unless the present part is out of all proportion, to be a most minute and leisurely history. The subject, with its ecclesiastical setting and opportunity for minute description of monasteries, mission houses, church services and the like, has long been a temptation to Mr. Mackenzie, who fell—but endearingly—to the subject in his Michael saga and has now succumbed completely. Unfortunately the best 'copy' was used at its freshest in these earlier books and the present one is depressingly dead. Accustomed as we all are to Mr. Mackenzie's versatile heroes, with their catholic tastes, fluctuations between retreats and chorus girls and variegated matrimonial ventures, Mark is surprisingly a 'level tracker'. Not only is he dull himself, but his friends are dull, their conversational range extraordinarily limited, their horizon unrelievedly cloistral. What sinners there are, are sad sinners straying both reluctantly and conventionally from the highways and hurrying back to the monotonous routine which constitutes Mark's first stage. Further, Mr. Mackenzie has adopted an unwonted asceticism of style and there are none of the digressions, excrescences, and lavish indulgences in local colour which he formerly did so well. It is a pity that he should keep so rigidly to the point just when the point seems least crucial.

R. M. H.

*Contrasts*, by Lawren Harris (McClelland and Stewart; \$1.50).

Mr. Harris has been betrayed by the appalling laxity of the *vers-libre* habit, now rife on this continent, into publishing an extremely bad book of verses. It differs from most of the other bad books of verse that beset us because it is the work of one who has already made his name as a painter of Canadian shacks and suburbs and woods and rocks. It has therefore an extrinsic interest for students of Canadian art if not for students of literature.

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In his writing, Mr. Harris seems to be pre-occupied to an almost monotonous extent with vague, transcendental reflections on life and humanity. He shows no interest in or feeling for Nature and no interest in particularized, individualized human life. His mind runs to humanity in the abstract and the aggregate. For this shadowy Leviathan he entertains a mixture of affection and irony which seems to be personal to him. This is as much as we can get from his cloudy pages. But it is something. It helps to explain the coldness and lack of intimacy in his landscapes and his preference among city subjects for houses and streets with no people in them. The shack brings him closer to humanity in the abstract than the human individual does, and yet holds him in the visual world which he wishes to paint. And so his best work has lain in that field.

Mr. Harris's pictures have often been found perplexing in their mood. The spectator does not know always whether he is called upon to laugh or cry. With *Contrasts* before us we wonder whether Mr. Harris himself always knows. We suspect that he is as much the victim as the exponent of his own irony. It often seems to work when he does not want it and to fail him when he does. He has a streak of Heine in him and a streak of Whitman, and the two do not blend. It is for Mr. Harris, whether he writes or paints, to master this discrepancy in himself.

B. F.

### Russia

*Russia, To-day and To-morrow*, by Paul N. Miliukov (Macmillan, 1922).

One is grateful to anyone who lifts a corner of the veil which falls between Russia and the rest of the world to-day. The famine worker who tell of Russian towns and villages where death is the liberator and life the oppressor; refugees who are beginning a new life stripped of material possessions; these lift corners of the veil. Yet one is chary of generalizations from particular experiences for a country of many races and of vast distances. One longs for a survey of events and an estimate of the forces which lie behind and determine concrete phenomena. One

wants the veil rolled back that the whole scene may be discovered.

Paul Miliukov is exceptionally fitted to do this. He has a mass of evidence at his disposal and attacks it with the trained mind of the historian; he is a man of action, a former member of the Duma, and a supporter of government reform; he is a Russian and can speak with authority on the Russian character:

To me the Russian people is neither a 'Christophorus' (Christ-bearer), nor Communist, nor 'semi-savage', nor a 'wild animal'. . . . The Russian people is a very complex phenomenon, and one may find in it as many features as one needs to prove any view.

The book covers a wide range from an historical and economic survey since 1917 to an estimate of Russia's contribution to art and literature. It includes a chronological account of the rise of the Bolshevik power and of the opposition to that power in the South, in the North, and in Siberia. Foreign influences are estimated and an account is given of the spasmodic and inadequate interference of the Allies which seems to have made the confusion more confounded; it is a tale of mixed motives and divided councils. We read of the part played by the Czechoslovak army and of the imperialistic adventure of Japan in the Trans-Baikal Territory—an adventure not yet ended. We read of the sin of the 'Greens' in opposition to both 'Whites' and 'Reds'; their aim, the end of civil war; their practice, often brigandage. Behind the various factions stands the peasant, careless of parties and careful of land. We read of complete economic dislocation culminating in the famine. We read of the failure of the government in enforcing taxation and food levies because of the temper of the people.

It is plain that Professor Miliukov is in opposition both to Reactionaries and to Bolsheviks. He holds that the Bolshevik revolution is primarily international in aim and believes that the future holds not the evolution but the overthrow of the Government. He declares that centralization, the Red Army, and espionage are the main weapons by which the Government maintains a small party of its supporters in power in the face of popular dis-

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illusionment. His hope lies in the creation of a democratic farmer government in the future. He believes that economic exhaustion and disillusionment of the masses mark the beginning of the end. A passion for education among the peasantry he finds a good omen. He shares with many other Russians and with many famine workers the conviction that Russia will recover:

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M. W.

*Russia after Four Years of Revolution*, by S. S. Masloff (P. S. King; 5/6).

Mr. Masloff's book contains much useful and interesting information about the course of Russian affairs from 1918 to 1921. But the author does not strengthen his claim to be regarded as impartial when he characterizes the communist government as being entirely responsible for the 'ghastly conditions now throttling Russia' (ignoring the effects of war, invasion, drought, and the whole unhappy legacy of the past): when he refers to the party in power as '600,000 madmen and scoundrels, hated by 65 million adults': when he describes the state orphanages as 'angel farms' and 'hotbeds of vice' where 'theft, hooliganism, and prostitution were rife': when he observes that in Russia the human soul has become 'imbued with bestial cruelty, cynicism, and falsehood', and so on. Not everybody will believe his statement that 'at Saratov, during the great fire, when children were perishing in the flames, the parents would not allow them to be saved, saying that it was better for them to die than to be tortured and rot alive in the "Houses for Children"'. It is a pity that our information about Russia has to be mixed with poisonous stuff like this.

Mr. Masloff's figures do not inspire us with confidence when he says (page 114), 'In 1920, the proportion (of homeless children in Moscow) increased to 25-30 per cent., and according to some other statistics, even to 40 per cent.' (apparently you pay your money and you take your choice!). And anybody who was in Russia in 1922 knows that when Mr. Masloff says that 'trams were unavailable' and that 'there are no bookshops', he is describing a state of affairs which no longer existed. Having fled from Russia more than a year ago, the author can make

only passing references to the New Economic Policy. He ignores the great reform which has been effected by the abolition of arbitrary confiscation of food supplies and the adoption of a sound, practical, and fixed tax in kind, and speaks in a confused way of the 'mad system of the food tax' as if no change had taken place.

It is desirable that we should have books to describe the great loss and ruin and cruelty which have accompanied the Russian revolution, as they have accompanied previous attempts to destroy the existing order by sudden violence. But although Mr. Masloff's book is better than some other propagandist writings, and although it contains enough truth to give it a certain historical value, it must be read with caution.

H. R. K.

*A Short History of the World*, by H. G. Wells (Macmillan; \$4.00).

Mr. Wells has undertaken a new adventure, a world history for the busy man, encompassing the record from palaeozoic beginnings to the sequelae of the Great War which 'ended nothing, began nothing, and settled nothing'. One wishes that this work had appeared before the now celebrated *Outline of History*, from which it is quite distinct in form though similar in spirit. For it omits those more specific historical judgments in the controversial discussion of which the real and signal quality of the former work was too often forgotten. In the *Outline* Wells entered daringly, and sometimes hastily, into the fields of the professional historian. Here he has a clearer and simpler task where he is not liable to the same kind of challenge. For this sweeping survey, of Cro-Magnards and Sumerians, of Assyrians and Jews, of Greeks and Persians, of Romans and Huns, down to the principalities, powers, and democracies of to-day, belongs to the creative imagination. It is in fact a pageant of history, in the broad and serious sense of the term. Against the background of the social and economic life high figures stalk, Alexander who 'married the East and the West', Buddha who 'concentrated on self and sought to destroy it', Asoka, 'greatest of kings', Confucius who taught 'the way of the noble or aristocratic man', and Jesus who 'struck at patriotism and the bonds of family loyalty in the name of God's universal fatherhood and brotherhood of man'. For modern times Wells, in the same salient and vivid way, deals with movements rather than personages. It is the world seen through a temperament, but it may well be maintained that after all there is no other way of seeing the world. It all depends on the temperament. Perhaps nothing is more characteristic of the author than the last illustration—and it may be remarked that the whole work is admirably illustrated—showing 'a peaceful garden in England', underneath which are added the words, 'given wisdom, all mankind might live in such gardens'.

R. M. M.





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Wholesale Prices ..... (Michell)	162.9	166.2	168.3	170.2	161.9
Family Budget..... (Labour Gazette)	\$20.90	\$20.87	\$20.88	\$20.97	\$21.49
Volume of Employment ..... (Employment Service of Canada)	94.6	95.8	95.2	.....	81.6
Twelve Canadian Securities ..... (Michell)	112.9	117.3	114.4	117.5	105.6

IN the old fairy-tale the boy who alarmed his neighbours by crying 'Wolf! wolf!' when there was no wolf (and afterwards laughed at their excitement) was at last eaten when a wolf appeared, everyone regarding his dying cries of anguish as another of his little jokes.

Parallels to the story have multiplied since the modern Press began its devastating career, since Pip and Squeak took charge of it. Stunt after stunt has been practiced on an unsuspecting public, till finally stunts have lost their interest. It is because his will-to-believe has been exploited so shamelessly that the modern reader looks with suspicion at every scare-head in his paper.

An excellent instance of this is the breakdown of the Premiers' Conference at Paris. Reparations 'crises' have succeeded one another for years with a regularity so monotonous that a large part of the public has almost ceased to believe in the reality of crises; and eventually, the creation of an open rift between France and the British Empire, after ten years of close friendship and five of brotherhood in arms, an event which might have been expected to strike the duller imagination, has been viewed by the ordinary man, at any rate on this side the Atlantic, with comparative indifference.

It is only because the bearing of these diplomatic struggles on the personal welfare of the producer in North America has not yet been understood fully, that we permit ourselves to treat the news so lightly. The connection between the manufacture of, say, hardware and clothing for our western market, and a possible occupation of the Ruhr district, is by no means obvious, and our own politicians have been silent on the subject. But however it may be camouflaged by silence or the use of diplomatic phrases, it is none the less a reality.

We hope that it may be possible, in the February number of THE CANADIAN FORUM, to publish a study of the reparations problem in its present phase, based on fuller information than is at present available to anyone in Canada. Meanwhile, although there is much to be learned of the circumstances immediately leading to the break, and although there is ample latitude for speculation with regard to French action in the immediate future, certain permanent realities can no longer be denied.

In the first place, it is generally recognized that

to precipitate a collapse in Germany would be to provoke the most serious consequences in the rest of Europe. As Mr. Keynes has pointed out, when Europe was in stable equilibrium before the war, Germany was the best customer of Russia, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Hungary; the second best customer of Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark; the third best customer of France. It has yet to be proved that any one of these countries can permanently prosper without that custom.

In the second place, it is generally recognized now that Germany is at the end of her financial tether. She has only succeeded in paying reparations up to date—and these are some \$3,000,000,000 less than the sums originally expected of her—by selling paper marks (indirectly, it is true) to those citizens of neutral and allied countries who possessed more money than brains. In the process of inducing them to pay a large share of the indemnity, she has depressed the mark one-two-thousandth of its former value, and sent the speculator, somewhat the poorer for his experience, in search of other and less costly forms of gambling. This kind of finance cannot be carried much further; nor is there any more hopeful alternative in sight.

In the third place, it is generally recognized that without some equivalent for these elusive reparation payments, the government of France, in the next four years, if it maintains itself at all, will only do so with the very greatest difficulty. With the prospect of a deficit for 1923, amounting to fr. 3,000,000,000 *in addition to the whole of her expenditure on reconstruction*, she faces financial risks which are none the less terrible because the deluge is still some distance in the future.

Europe is on the horns of a dilemma. France *must* be paid; but neither by force nor persuasion can sums be collected from Germany which will even remotely satisfy her present needs.

It is not to be wondered that desperate and futile measures are proposed. The drowning man proverbially clutches at a straw. But if Europe is ruined as a sequel to the Treaty, the farmers on our prairie, who depend on Europe for their markets, and to whom the Canadian wage earner and the Canadian capitalist alike must ultimately look for their employment, will not escape the consequences.

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